

# Maintenance Memorandum

**Date:** March 30, 1998

**Subject:** Pesticide Spray Areas

The subject matter is currently being updated. Please contact Scott Wheeler at 517 322-3314 or e-mail (wheelers) for updated information.

**Attachment**

“Pesticide Spray Areas” September 17, 1987; 2 pgs.



## MAINTENANCE MEMO

DATE: September 17, 1987

ROADSIDES

TO: District Operations Engineers

FROM: Maurice E. Witteveen  
Engineer of Maintenance

SUBJECT: Pesticide Spray Areas

The question has been asked regarding when it is safe to return to work in an area that has recently been sprayed with pesticides.

It is advisable to stay out of areas sprayed with pesticides until the spray solution has dried on the plants. This could be a matter of a few minutes on dry days, and perhaps, as long as an hour or more on cool, humid mornings.

The spray area is described as the area of vegetation where the pesticide is applied. There would be no reason to suspend activities in the vegetated area across the road from the area being sprayed, or any patching or shoulder work being done on the pavement in the spray area.

MDOT uses low volatile or non-volatile materials so there is no pesticide in the air after the spraying operation. Any odor that may be present would be that of the solvent or the drying agent, similar to the solvent or drying agent in paint. These solvents are not a problem in the open air.

The one activity that we do not want to do before or after a spray application, is mowing. Mowing should not be done during the period of four days prior to the spray application to two days after the application. Success of the spray application depends on getting the pesticide into the root system. A freshly mowed area does not have enough leaf surface to absorb adequate pesticide.

While the pesticide is taken into the leaf almost immediately, sometimes it takes 24 hours or so for the pesticide to migrate from the leaf surface into the root system. If the leaves are cut off immediately after spraying, a large portion of the chemical is cut off with the leaves usually resulting in poor results in controlling the unwanted vegetation.

District Operations  
Engineers

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September 17, 1987

One last word of caution, the information in this letter pertains to MDOT pesticide applications. MDOT uses only the safer formulations. For spraying done in other areas or at home, follow the recommendations on the label.

In the event MDOT were to use a pesticide that has requirements other than those included in this letter, a special letter will be issued.

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Engineer of Maintenance

MEW:RMW:jh

cc: J. Michels, P. Miller

Regional Foresters/Res. Specialists

RD:spray areas:mm